
IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES.

JUNE 2, 1896.—Ordered to be printed.

MR. PALMER, from the Committee on Pensions, submitted the following

REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 1022.]

The Committee on Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 1022) granting a pension to Byron Cotton, have examined the same and report:

The report of the Committee on Invalid Pensions of the House of Representatives, hereto appended, is adopted, and the passage of the bill is recommended.

HOUSE REPORT.

The bill was favorably reported by the committee in the Fifty-third Congress, but the bill died on the Calendar.

Your committee adopt the report made by Mr. Lacey on February 19, 1895, as follows:

"Byron Cotton, of Company A, Twenty-fourth Iowa Infantry, enlisted on the 8th day of August, 1862, and served until the 27th day of May, 1865. He applied for a pension under the general laws and was placed upon the rolls at \$4, which was afterwards increased to \$12, for gunshot wound of left leg and injury to face and right eye, and resulting disease of eyes and impaired hearing of both ears.

"He is now drawing a pension of \$12 a month under the general law for those disabilities.

"The soldier is totally blind, and has been for several years.

"The evidence on file in the claims (certificate No. 82771) in the Pension Bureau shows that the soldier's eyes were injured in the service, and the evidence also tends strongly to show that his present blindness is the result of his army service. The evidence upon this question is not sufficient to satisfy the Pension Bureau that the blindness is the result of his army service. Mr. Hayes, of Iowa, appeared before the committee, explaining the helpless condition of the soldier and the esteem in which he was held while living in Clinton, and Mr. Long, of Iowa, making like statements as to the said soldier while living at Ottumwa.

"The evidence as to the origin of the blindness is very voluminous, and we therefore do not set it out fully herein; but the evidence is quite strong, tending to show that the blindness was due to his army service and was a result of his pensionable disease of the eyes. The Pension Bureau, on grounds satisfactory to the medical officers, do not accept the blindness as the result of army service, but there is no evidence tending to show that the blindness is due to any vice or fault of the soldier.

"The soldier is poor and is supported by his wife, who keeps a boarding house. He is totally and permanently blind, and if the evidence of army origin of his blindness had been accepted, he would be entitled to \$72 a month under the general laws. But inasmuch as he has not made his title clear to the full rate of pension due to total blindness, and in view of the fact that the evidence does strongly show that his blindness is due to army service, we think that it would be a proper case for Congress to grant some assistance to this blind and helpless veteran."